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In another part of his works St Pierre has introduced the following epitaph, written by himself upon Rousseau.

‘He cultivated music, botany, and eloquence: he disdained fortune, and contended with hypocrites and tyrants. He improved the condition of infants, and increased the happiness of mothers; and he was persecuted. He lived and died in the hope, which is common to us all, of a better life.’

We have left ourselves no room for observations on the works of Rousseau; nor, after all that has been said upon the subject, would it be easy to offer any thing very new or interesting. His reputation, as a vigorous and elegant writer, remains undiminished; and is probably as well established as that of any author of modern times. His philosophical opinions are variously esteemed, according to the views and interests of those who judge them; but as they accord in substance with the liberal ideas, which are making such rapid progress in all parts of the world, they stand a good chance of gaining, rather than losing, hereafter in the public estimation. The spirit of his political writings is excellent; but their scientific value is not perhaps so great as it has sometimes been considered. The theory of a *Social Contract*, though somewhat plausible at first view, does not bear the test of accurate examination, and is rarely admitted at the present day by competent judges. But the examination of this subject would require of itself a long treatise; and it is much too important and extensive to be touched upon, even superficially, at the close of an article.

ART. II.—*A Discourse delivered at Plymouth, December 22, 1820, in commemoration of the first settlement of New England. By Daniel Webster. Boston, 1821, 8vo.*

AMERICANS have been repeatedly charged by those foreign writers, who find it for their interest to hold up our national character to ridicule before the great republic of letters, with being deficient in that patriotic attachment to the land we spring from, in that filial and pious regard for the ashes of our forefathers, which the people of other countries feel proud to cherish. We are scornfully told of the shifting population of our villages, and reproached with a migratory, restless, and unstable disposition, and are pointed to the enterprising spirit

of adventure, which is constantly pouring out the inhabitants of the eastern states into the luxuriant valley of the Mississippi, in the proof and justification of the charge. You have no fixed and settled feeling of affection for the spot, on which you were born and bred, say our accusers; none of that deep veneration for the 'genius of the place,' which lifts up the soul of an Asiatic, as he wanders through groves consecrated for uncounted years to the repose of his fathers' dust, and the worship of his fathers' gods; or which inspires the European, while he gazes on temples, palaces, and monuments of the dead, in whose revered piles every stone is associated with some heart-thrilling recollection of the past; none of those lofty sentiments of awe, which are awakened in the breast of the inhabitant of an older country, as he treads upon the field of battle, that has been fattened with the blood, and immortalized by the achievements of his gallant ancestry. From this unfounded charge, we desire no more ample vindication of our name, than is afforded by the strain of ardent love of country pervading Mr Webster's discourse, which we trust and believe meets with a response in the bosom of every native American. Destitute, as we know our country to be, of those works of ancient art, upon whose pillared halls and sculptured marble the admiration of mankind has been accumulating fresh glories, age after age; and destitute, as we hope it will long continue, of those costly structures, which have been piled up in the old world by caprice, by luxury, by superstition, or by pride, at the expense of unutterable misery on the part of an oppressed people, still we contend, and we may cite the occasion, upon which, and the place wherein this discourse was delivered, no less than the discourse itself, to bear us out in maintaining, that Americans regard the scenes of their national glory with sentiments, as honorable to their character, as they are worthy of the cause of liberty and of patriotism.

'We have come to this Rock,' says Mr Webster, in the course of his introductory remarks, 'to record here our homage for our Pilgrim Fathers, our sympathy in their sufferings, our gratitude for their labors, our admiration of their virtues, our veneration for their piety, and our attachment to those principles of civil and religious liberty, which they encountered the dangers of the ocean, the storms of heaven, the violence of savages, disease, exile, and famine, to enjoy and to establish. And we would leave here, also, for the generations, which are rising up rapidly to fill our places,

some proof, that we have endeavoured to transmit the great inheritance unimpaired ; that in our estimate of public principles and private virtue, in our veneration of religion and piety, in our devotion to civil and religious liberty, in our regard to whatever advances human knowledge, or improves human happiness, we are not altogether unworthy of our origin. There is a local feeling connected with this occasion, too strong to be resisted ; a sort of *genius of the place*, which inspires and awes us. We feel that we are on the spot, where the first scene of our history was laid ; where the hearths and altars of New England were first placed ; where christianity, and civilization, and letters made their first lodgment, in a vast extent of country, covered with a wilderness, and peopled by roving barbarians. We are here, at the season of the year, at which the event took place. The imagination irresistibly and rapidly draws around us the principal features and the leading characters in the original scene. We cast our eyes abroad on the ocean, and we see where the little barque, with the interesting group upon its deck, made its slow progress to the shore. We look around us, and behold the hills and promontories, where the anxious eyes of our fathers first saw the places of habitation and of rest. We feel the cold which benumbed, and listen to the winds which pierced them. Beneath us is the Rock, on which New England received the feet of the Pilgrims. We seem even to behold them, as they struggle with the elements, and, with toilsome efforts, gain the shore. We listen to the chiefs in council ; we see the unexampled exhibition of female fortitude and resignation ; we hear the whisperings of youthful impatience, and we see, what a painter of our own has also represented by his pencil, chilled and shivering childhood,—houseless, but for a mother's arms,—couchless, but for a mother's breast,—till our own blood almost freezes. The mild dignity of Carver and of Bradford ; the decisive and soldier-like air and manner of Standish ; the devout Brewster ; the enterprising Allerton ; the general firmness and thoughtfulness of the whole band ; their conscious joy for dangers escaped ; their deep solicitude about dangers to come ; their trust in heaven ; their high religious faith, full of confidence and anticipation :—all these seem to belong to the place, and to be present upon the occasion, to fill us with reverence and admiration.' pp. 10—12.

Indeed, the honorable testimony borne throughout this discourse to the character of our ancestors, to our own estimation of that character, and to our sincere and warm attachment to the land, in which are the graves of our kindred and our race, is one of its most remarkable features. It fastens our attention while Mr Webster is placing before us, in the most

lively and graphic coloring, the circumstances of the settlement of Plymouth, while he traces the peculiar qualities of the colonies which settled New England, in distinction from others of ancient and modern times, while he looks back to seize and delineate the leading traits of our history for the last hundred years, and most of all in his elucidation of the nature of society and government in New England. We have no design to attempt following him through all these comprehensive topics, illustrated and adorned as they have been by his masterly hand. Our design is merely to introduce a few observations upon one or two subjects, which it did not come within the scope or nature of the discourse to discuss minutely, but which the perusal of it suggests, concluding with a brief notice of the period in the history of New England immediately preceding the event so admirably commemorated by Mr Webster.

The difference between the colonies of New England and those established by the Greeks and Romans, and by the nations of modern Europe in the East and West Indies, with the effects of this difference upon the character of our country, is very fully explained in the discourse. And it is worthy of observation that much, perhaps most, of this difference, great as it is, will appear, on examination, to have been contrary to the manifest wishes and declared intent of the English government, and of all the original grantees of New England. Paradoxical as this may be thought, it is not the less a literal truth. At the commencement of the revolution, the confederate colonies might be arranged in five distinct classes. In some of them, as in Virginia and New York, the property of the colony and the administration of its government were united in the crown. In others, like the Carolinas, the crown had reserved to itself the government of the colonies, which were owned by certain individuals. A third kind was that where both the colony and its government had been granted to personal proprietaries and their heirs, as Pennsylvania to William Penn, and Maryland to lord Baltimore. All the colonies of New England, Plymouth, Massachusetts with Maine and New Hampshire, its dependences, New Haven, Connecticut, and Rhode Island originally constituted a fourth division, in which both the government and the ownership of the colony resided in the people themselves, who occupied the soil; but after the consolidation of Plymouth and Massachusetts into a single province, governed by agents of the crown, the condition of Massachusetts was

unlike that of any other colony in English America. Now it is evident from this, in the first place, that, as the colonists in this part of the country, unlike the rest of the colonists, united in their own persons the possession of the soil, the *proprietaryship* of the colony, and the direction of all departments of the government, of course they were almost independent of the metropolis from the beginning. It is equally clear that nothing could have been farther from the design of king James, than to allow of this independence. These colonies, as planned by the projectors of them, or at least as organized by their charters, were mere private trading companies, incorporated by the crown for the better management of their business, like any other mercantile corporation. Hence, in the old laws of Massachusetts, we do not find the colonists spoken of either as the subjects of any prince, or as the citizens of any state, but as *freemen of the corporation*, whose affairs were regulated by a governor with a board of assistants or directors, controlled in the last instance by all the corporators assembled in general court. This simple fact is the key to much which is obscure in the early laws, history, and pretensions of New England. When the first charters were drawn up, as the whole tenor of them plainly proves, no one ever dreamed that they comprised a constitution of civil government; and that the grantees had a right to transfer themselves and their charters to America, in order to establish there a new form of government and a new code of laws independent of those of England, was an exposition of the charters, as unexpected as it was displeasing to the metropolis. Assuredly, the English council never anticipated that the transcendent powers of the governor of a mighty province were concealed under the seemingly insignificant authority of the head of an obscure trading corporation; nor that such a corporation, under the guise of by-laws, was about to erect a peculiar system of internal administration, the germ and outline of a form of government for future independent nations; nor that this corporation would assume to itself the right of establishing a representative legislature, contrary to the express provision of its charter; nor still less that the colonists could so shelter themselves under the obscurities of their charter, as to substitute treason to the colony in the place of treason to the king, exercise the privilege of coining money, and otherwise invade the most sacred branches of the royal prerogative with impunity. Yet such was the course pursued

by Massachusetts and her sister colonies in New England ;— a course, that was largely conducive to the growth of those peculiarities in our forefathers' views, which are described with so much force and felicity by Mr Webster.

'They came hither,' are his words ;— 'They came hither to a land, from which they were never to return. Hither they had brought, and here they were to fix, their hopes, their attachments, and their objects. Some natural tears they shed, as they left the pleasant abodes of their fathers, and some emotions they suppressed, when the white cliffs of their native country, now seen for the last time, grew dim to their sight. They were acting, however, upon a resolution not to be changed. With whatever stifled regrets, with whatever occasional hesitation, with whatever appalling apprehensions, which might sometimes arise with force to shake the firmest purpose, they had yet committed themselves to heaven and the elements ; and a thousand leagues of water were soon interposed to separate them for ever from the region which gave them birth. A new existence awaited them here ; and when they saw these shores, rough, cold, barbarous, and barren as then they were, they beheld their country. That mixed and strong feeling, which we call love of country, and which is, in general, never extinguished in the heart of man, grasped and embraced its proper object here. Whatever constitutes *country*, except the earth and the sun, all the moral causes of affection and attachment, which operate upon the heart, they had brought with them to their new abode. Here were now their families and their friends, their homes and their property. Before they reached the shore, they had established the elements of a social system, and at a much earlier period had settled their forms of religious worship. At the moment of their landing, therefore, they possessed institutions of government and institutions of religion ; and friends and families, and social and religious institutions, established by consent, founded on choice and preference, how nearly do these fill up our whole idea of country ! The morning, that beamed on the first night of their repose, saw the Pilgrims already established in their country. There were political institutions, and civil liberty, and religious worship. Poetry has fancied nothing, in the wanderings of heroes, so distinct and characteristic. Here was man, indeed, unprotected and unprovided for, on the shore of a rude and fearful wilderness ; but it was politic, intelligent, and educated man. Every thing was civilized, but the physical world. Institutions, containing in substance all that ages had done for human government, were established in a forest. Cultivated mind was to act on uncultivated nature ; and, more than all, a government and a country were to commence, with the very first found-

ations laid under the divine light of the christian religion. Happy auspices of a happy futurity! Who would wish that his country's existence had otherwise begun? Who would desire the power of going back to the ages of fable? Who would wish for other emblazoning of his country's heraldry, or other ornaments of her genealogy, than to be able to say, that her first existence was with intelligence, her first breath the inspirations of liberty, her first principle the truth of divine religion?

Connected with this subject of the peculiarities in the nature of the colonies of New England is another inquiry as to the kind of connexion, the degree of dependence, in which the colonists considered themselves placed with respect to England. It is very certain that when the puritans began to flock to America, for the sake of indulging in their own forms of religious worship unmolested, strong suspicions were awakened in the minds of the high-church party, that the motives, views, and purposes of the emigrants were not purely loyal. The bigoted upholders of the established church knew that the dissenters had been persecuted with unrelenting severity in some reigns, and harshly treated in all.—The inevitable consequence of this must be to estrange and alienate them from the interest of their native land, in which they were compelled to lead a life of insecurity, degradation, and wretchedness. Conformable to this is the testimony of historians. ‘Speculative reasoners in that age,’—says Hume in allusion to the colonists,—‘foretold that, after draining their mother-country of inhabitants, they would soon shake off her yoke, and erect an independent government in America.’—Indeed, it is well understood, that the puritans burned with an equally ardent zeal for both civil and religious freedom. They were alike for purging the high places of the church from its abominations, and for withstanding the exorbitant power arrogated by the Tudors and the Stuarts. And if the government had promoted and facilitated, instead of checking, the voluntary expatriation of these turbulent spirits, king Charles would, perhaps, have been spared the humiliation of dying on the scaffold, by the axe of the common executioner, and an obscure sect of religionists, might never have entertained pretensions so lofty as to be induced to lift up a soldier of fortune, to fill the throne of the Plantagenets. Among the emigrant puritans, there was, undoubtedly, a large number of the most distinguished leaders in the long parliament, and bravest partizans of the round-head

troops. John Hampden resided some time in Plymouth, and Hugh Peters, in Massachusetts :—which later colony recounts among its governors, the artful diplomatist, zealous republican, and enthusiastic sectary, sir Henry Vane. Nay, it is a certain fact, for which Mather, Neal, Hutchinson and Hume, are sufficient vouchers, that Charles I. by an order of council, prevented the intended emigration of several men, who soon afterwards contributed to strip him of his crown and life, among whom were Haslerig, Pym, and Cromwell. There was, therefore, ample cause for the mother country to be watchful of the colonies ; but the government at home carried their jealousy too far, when they suspected the exiles of a design to throw off their allegiance to the crown. Our ancestors entertained very peculiar opinions with relation to this point. They distinguished subjection, observes Hutchinson,* into necessary and voluntary. *Necessary subjection*, according to their ideas, arose from actual residence within a country, to whose laws the resident would feel himself obliged by duty and compelled by situation to submit. But they maintained that every person was justified in expatriating himself, even in the extreme case when the state should be in pressing need of his services, provided his inherent unalienable right to liberty of conscience was invaded. Such was their own condition. Now as they purchased their lands of the original inhabitants of the country to which they removed, succeeding at the same time to the soil and the dominion of that country, they conceived that they should thus have been rendered wholly independent of the English government, had they not accepted a charter therefrom, and thus entered into a state of *voluntary subjection*, binding them in circumstances where all necessary subjection was at an end. In short, they considered their allegiance to the crown to rest on charters alone, and a mutual compact made between the parties for their common benefit, which became null and void so soon as either violated the conditions of the agreement. But for them to have disclaimed the authority of the metropolis, at this early period, would have been sure destruction ; because the Dutch settlers along the Hudson, and the French in Acadia would gladly have seized upon the least occasion for crushing our colonies, were they not fearful of provoking the resentment of England. Of course the

* History of Massachusetts, i, 452.

colonists would feel cautious how they rashly divested themselves of their only safeguard, although it is unquestionable that the bond of union, which connected them with Europe, hung loosely upon them, since they assumed and exercised the right of enacting what laws, and adopting what form of government seemed most conducive to their interest, without pausing to inquire whether the common law was or was not infringed.

There is no part of this discourse, which seems to us more honorable to the speaker, than that in which he alludes to the venerable John Adams; a man, whose high career and signal fortune bear witness to the justice of the distinguished praise bestowed on him by Mr Webster. Well may the patriot of the revolution say, in the words of the poet quoted by Cicero,

Gratus sum

Laudari a te viro laudato.

The whole passage is so admirable, that we cannot forbear extracting it.

‘It is now five and forty years since the growth and rising glory of America were portrayed in the English parliament with inimitable beauty, by the most consummate orator of modern times. Going back somewhat more than half a century, and describing our progress as foreseen from that point by his amiable friend, lord Bathurst, then living, he spoke of the wonderful progress, which America had made during the period of a single human life. There is no American heart, I imagine, that does not glow, both with conscious patriotic pride and admiration for one of the happiest efforts of eloquence, so often as the vision of “that little speck, scarce visible in the mass of national interest, a small seminal principle, rather than a formed body,” and the progress of its astonishing development and growth, are recalled to the recollection. But a stronger feeling might be produced, if we were able to take up this prophetic description where he left it, and placing ourselves at the point of time, in which he was speaking, to set forth with equal felicity the subsequent progress of the country. There is yet among the living a most distinguished and venerable name, a descendant of the Pilgrims; one who has been attended through life by a great and fortunate genius; a man illustrious by his own great merits, and favoured of heaven in the long continuation of his years. The time, when the English orator was thus speaking, preceded, but by a few days, the actual opening of the revolutionary drama at Lexington. He, to whom I have alluded, then at the age of forty, was among the most zealous and able

defenders of the violated rights of his country. He seemed already to have filled a full measure of public service, and attained an honorable fame. The moment was full of difficulty and danger, and big with events of immeasurable importance. The country was on the very brink of a civil war, of which no man could foretell the duration or the result. Something more than a courageous hope or characteristic ardor would have been necessary to impress the glorious prospect on his belief, if, at the moment before the sound of the first shock of actual war had reached his ears, some attendant spirit had opened to him the vision of the future ;—if it had said to him, “ The blow is struck ; and America is severed from England for ever ! ” if it had informed him, that he himself, the next annual revolution of the sun, should put his own hand to the great Instrument of Independence, and write his name where all nations should behold it, and all time should not efface it ; that ere long he himself should maintain the interest, and represent the sovereignty of his new-born country, in the proudest courts of Europe ; that he should one day exercise her supreme magistracy ; that he should yet live to behold ten millions of fellow citizens paying him the homage of their deepest gratitude and kindest affections ; that he should see distinguished talent and high public trust resting where his name rested ; that he should even see, with his own unclouded eyes, the close of the second century of New England, who had begun life almost with its commencement, and lived through nearly half the whole history of his country ; and that, on the morning of this auspicious day, he should be found in the political councils of his native state, revising, by the light of experience, that system of government, which, forty years before, he had assisted to frame and establish ; and great and happy as he should then behold his country, there should be nothing in prospect to cloud the scene, nothing to check the ardor of that confident and patriotic hope, which should glow in his bosom to the end of his long-protracted and happy life.’

Mr Webster’s discourse is replete with original views ; but that portion of it, which relates to the public institutions of New England, bears, in a peculiar manner, the stamp of his vigorous and discriminating mind. Among the many important subjects there discussed, we must confine ourselves to that of general instruction.

‘ Having detained you so long with these observations, I must yet advert to another most interesting topic, the Free Schools. In this particular, New England may be allowed to claim, I think, a merit of a peculiar character. She early adopted and has constantly maintained the principle, that it is the undoubted right

and the bounden duty of government, to provide for the instruction of all youth. That, which is elsewhere left to chance, or to charity, we secure by law. For the purpose of public instruction, we hold every man subject to taxation in proportion to his property, and we look not to the question whether he himself have or have not children to be benefited by the education, for which he pays. We regard it as a wise and liberal system of police, by which property and life and the peace of society are secured. We seek to prevent, in some measure, the extension of the penal code, by inspiring a salutary and conservative principle of virtue and of knowledge in an early age. We hope to excite a feeling of respectability and a sense of character, by enlarging the capacity and increasing the sphere of intellectual enjoyment. By general instruction, we seek, as far as possible, to purify the whole moral atmosphere, to keep good sentiments uppermost, and to turn the strong current of feeling and opinion, as well as the censures of the law and the denunciations of religion, against immorality and crime. We hope for a security beyond the law and above the law, in the prevalence of enlightened and well principled moral sentiment. We hope to continue and prolong the time, when, in the villages and farm houses of New England, there may be undisturbed sleep within unbarred doors. And knowing that our government rests directly on the public will, that we may preserve it, we endeavour to give a safe and proper direction to that public will. We do not, indeed, expect all men to be philosophers or statesmen; but we confidently trust, and our expectation of the duration of our system of government rests on that trust, that by the diffusion of general knowledge and good and virtuous sentiments, the political fabric may be secure, as well against open violence and overthrow, as against the slow but sure undermining of licentiousness.'

We did intend, when we set out, to make some farther extracts from this discourse; and Mr Webster's ardent denunciation of the slave trade, which we well remember to have produced an effect on his audience like electricity, furnishes an inviting topic for remarks, which we are deterred from pursuing, through apprehension, lest this article should be drawn out to an unreasonable length; for which reason we must content ourselves with merely copying the conclusion of the discourse.

'The hours of this day are rapidly flying, and the occasion will soon be passed. Neither we nor our children can expect to behold its return. They are in the distant regions of futurity, they exist

only in the all-creating power of God, who shall stand here, a hundred years hence, to trace, through us, their descent from the Pilgrims, and to survey, as we have now surveyed, the progress of their country during the lapse of a century. We would anticipate their concurrence with us in our sentiments of deep regard for our common ancestors. We would anticipate and partake the pleasure with which they will then recount the steps of New England's advancement. On the morning of that day, although it will not disturb us in our repose, the voice of acclamation and gratitude, commencing on the Rock of Plymouth, shall be transmitted through millions of the sons of the Pilgrims, till it lose itself in the murmurs of the Pacific seas.

* * *

‘Advance, then, ye future generations! We would hail you, as you rise in your long succession to fill the places which we now fill, and to taste the blessings of existence, where we are passing, and soon shall have passed, our own human duration. We bid you welcome to this pleasant land of the Fathers. We bid you welcome to the healthful skies and verdant fields of New England. We greet your accession to the great inheritance which we have enjoyed. We welcome you to the blessings of good government, and religious liberty. We welcome you to the treasures of science and the delights of learning. We welcome you to the transcendent sweets of domestic life, to the happiness of kindred and parents and children. We welcome you to the immeasurable blessings of rational existence, the immortal hope of Christianity, and the light of everlasting Truth!’

Having made these observations concerning Mr Webster's discourse,—not so much because we flattered ourselves that our tribute of praise would increase his celebrity, as that we could not suffer one of the finest pieces of the day to pass unnoticed in our journal,—we now proceed to describe, according to the intimation already given, a period in our history, which is very closely and directly associated with this discourse, namely, a period of more than a century and a half, which elapsed between the discovery of America and the settlement at Plymouth ;—embracing the early intercourse of Europeans with our country, their voyages of discovery, commercial enterprises, and unsuccessful attempts to establish colonies in this quarter of the new world. The events, which happened during this interval, although by no means wanting in interest or importance, have been passed over in silence by some of the ordinary compilations connected with this subject, touched upon but cursorily and slightly by most

of those compilations, and presented to us by none of them in a clear, distinct, concise, and authentic narration. We will therefore, without any farther preface, give some account of our *ante-colonial* history,* a knowledge of which is necessary to the full understanding of many obscure points, in the antiquities of the eastern colonies.

What European it was that first approached this part of the continent, is a matter of doubt and uncertainty. Norway, whose hardy seamen were the earliest, and most adventurous navigators of the northern waters of the Atlantic, claims the distinction for Biron, a Norwegian, who is affirmed by Crantz, Pontoppidan, Torfæus, and others to have discovered, about the year 1001, an island, which he called Winland, from the profusion of grapes found growing spontaneously upon it, and which some late writers suppose to have been Newfoundland. A more questionable account of the discovery of the same island in the fourteenth century by a fisherman of Friesland, as related by Zeno, a Venetian navigator, may be read in Hakluyt or Purchas.—France, also, puts in her claim to the honor of the discovery, although her writers produce no satisfactory testimonials in support of her pretensions. The inhabitants of her maritime provinces habitually frequented the Grand Banks, sailed up the great river of Canada, and even published a chart of the neighboring seas, in the very beginning of the sixteenth century :—from which her historians argue, though with little plausibility, that her intercourse with America should be traced back to some obscure and unrecorded era in the darkness of the middle ages. Still more uncertain are the well-known pretensions of the Welch, who, to this day, piously seek for the descendants of Madoc among the savages beyond the Mississippi.† But, without stopping to

* The history of New-England may be distinguished into five periods or epochs, namely, the *aboriginal* ; the *ante-colonial*, as used in the text ; the *colonial* ; the *provincial*, extending from the forfeiture of the first charters to the revolution ; and the *constitutional*.

† The truth or falsehood of these pretended voyages is a curious subject of controversy, for which, however, this is not the proper place. Those, who feel disposed to enter into it, will find ample gratification in many books, that could be mentioned, especially Pontoppidan's History of Norway ; Torfæi Historia Vinlandiæ Antiquæ (a rare tract in the Ebeling Library ;) Southey's Madoc ; Williams' Inquiry into the truth of the Voyage of Madoc ; Encyclopédie Méthodique, Géographie, art. Canada ; Purchas' Pilgrimage, p. 617 ; Charlevoix, Nouvelle France, tom. i ; Gomara, Historia de las Indias, c. 37 ; and Belknap's American Biography.

consider these conflicting claims and apocryphal voyages, all which are proved by very slender evidence, we will come directly to the first voyage of discovery to this region, of which we possess any certain intelligence, that undertaken by the Cabots under the auspices of Henry VII of England.

While Spain was pushing her discoveries in the south, guided by the skill of Columbus and Vespucci, the king of England, animated with the hope of wealth and empire, planned an expedition for the purpose of exploring the ocean towards the north-west, where he was induced to believe there was a passage to the Indies. With this object in view,—the same which has been so frequently resumed and as frequently relinquished by his successors, and which is pursued so zealously at the present day,—with this object in view. Henry VII granted a royal commission to John Cabot, a Venetian pilot, residing at Bristol, and to his three sons, authorizing them to make discoveries in countries unknown to christians, assume the sovereignty of the countries discovered, and enjoy exclusive trade with the inhabitants. By virtue of this commission a small fleet was afterwards equipped, partly at the king's expense, partly at that of private individuals, in which Cabot and his son Sebastian embarked, with a company of three hundred mariners, in May 1497. Our knowledge of this voyage is collected from many detached and imperfect notices of it in different authors, who, while they establish the general facts in the most unquestionable manner, differ in many particular circumstances. The most probable account seems to be, that Cabot sailed north-west a few weeks, until his progress was arrested by floating icebergs, when he shaped his course to the south-west, and soon came in sight of a shore named by him *Prima Vista*, and generally believed to be some part of Labrador or Newfoundland. Thence he steered northward again to the sixty-seventh degree of latitude, where he was obliged to turn back by the discontent of his crew. He sailed along the coast in search of an outlet as far as the neighbourhood of the gulf of Mexico, when a mutiny broke out in the ship's company, in consequence of which the farther prosecution of the voyage was abandoned.—Cabot reached England with several savages and a valuable cargo, although some writers deny that he ever landed, and it is certain that he did not attempt

any conquest or settlement, in the countries which he discovered.

The voyage of Cabot was not immediately followed by any important consequences; but it is memorable as being the first voyage that is certainly known to have been made to this continent, and, as such, being the title by which the English claimed the territories that they subsequently acquired here. Three entire reigns, however, passed away before this title was effectually asserted, or even consummated by the formalities usual with Europeans. Various circumstances, which the histories of the period sufficiently develop, drew the attention of the English nation from the new world, and engrossed the counsellors of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary; nor was it until the reign of Elizabeth, when the views and power of England were extended by commerce, that the subjects of the maiden queen resumed their purpose of gaining establishments in America. Spanish literature, which, in the preceding reign, became fashionable in the court of Philip and Mary, had now diffused a knowledge of the new world among men of education and rank. The inexhaustible wealth, moreover, which Spain derived from her transatlantic dominions, excited the cupidity of the English, and plainly pointed out to them the quarter in which they could most successfully signalize their hatred of the prince, who sent forth against them the misnamed Invincible Armada. In this reign, therefore, among the many other splendid maritime enterprises which distinguished it, were the attempts of sir Humphry Gilbert, sir Walter Raleigh, and sir Richard Grenville to establish colonies in North America. Their exertions led to a better knowledge of the country, on which the 'throned vestal' bestowed the name of Virginia; and one of them formally took possession of it. But the miscarriage of their chief design was so complete, and aggravated by so many disasters, that the ardor of the nation for establishing colonies abroad was nearly extinguished.

Here, then, occurs another pause in the colonial enterprises of England. In common with the rest of Europe, she still continued to fish in the waters of North America, and trade with the savages on the adjoining shore; but there she stopped. Many years had been thus consumed in petty commercial adventures, when at last the voyage of Bartholo-

mew Gosnold, roused the nation from its lethargy. This voyage is the first, in which any particular examination was made of what is now New England. Fortunately we possess an authentic account of it, written by one of the company, and preserved in Purchas ; by means of which, in connexion with Dr Belknap's valuable commentary thereon, we have pretty complete information concerning the proceedings of Gosnold.—He set sail from Falmouth (March 26th, (o. s.) 1602) in a small bark with only thirty-two men, intending, as it seems, to leave a colony in America ; although historians are totally silent with respect to the projectors and patrons of the undertaking. Unlike preceding navigators, who, in making the voyage, had adopted a circuitous route by the gulf of Mexico, he steered as nearly west as the winds and currents would permit, and thus pointed out the only direct and proper course to Virginia. After a lapse of seven weeks he descried land within the bay since named Massachusetts ; but not feeling satisfied with the first harbour entered by the ship, he pursued the windings of the coast to the southward, exploring and naming Cape Cod, with the islands and other remarkable objects in its neighbourhood. The ship's crew landed repeatedly, for the purpose of trading with the natives, and examining the country, its soil, its productions ; and every thing, on which they cast their eyes, became a new source of wonder and delight. The savages were peaceable in their deportment, cordial in welcoming the strangers, and adorned with plates, pendants, and rings of copper, from which the English were led to flatter themselves, that the country afforded mines of this metal, perhaps of others more precious. They found the forests abounding with stately trees of the richest foliage, interspersed with gay lawns, over which numerous herds of deer were wandering in the fearlessness of undisturbed freedom.—Not only did they ascertain by experiment that the soil was propitious to the growth of European vegetables, but they saw many plants flourishing around them with the wildest luxuriance, which, in England, were slowly produced by careful cultivation. In short, the whole aspect of the country, so novel, so picturesque, impressed their minds with the image of an earthly paradise.

Animated with such feelings, Gosnold selected for his colony's residence one of the most romantic of the beautiful groupe

of islets, named by him Elizabeth's Islands. After building a house, however, and making arrangements for a settlement, he found the provisions of the company insufficient to support them till they could obtain another supply from home ; and the savages beginning to assume a hostile appearance, he was obliged to abandon his undertaking. Accordingly he re-embarked ; and, arriving in England, after an absence of about four months, with a rich lading of sassafras and furs, quickly diffused the reputation of his new discoveries.

The consequences of this voyage were more important than its seeming insignificance would lead us to anticipate ; for it revived among the English that ambition to acquire colonial possessions, which the inadequacy of former attempts had rendered unsuccessful. The length of the voyage from England to Virginia was diminished, as we should judge from inspecting the map, nearly one half by Gosnold's judicious innovation ;—at least Capt. Smith, the hero and the historian of the colony of Virginia, whom we shall mention more particularly hereafter, states that it was lessened more than five hundred leagues ;—and, in those days, an addition to a voyage of twenty-five or thirty degrees, in the open sea, was looked upon as greatly enhancing the risk of it. Besides, a new region had been discovered by Gosnold, which was represented as being in the highest degree delightful, nay, in the words of the original journalist of the voyage, as absolutely ravishing. The people of England could now perceive a vast continent spread out before them, of which they considered themselves the rightful and exclusive lords. Its interior provinces, indeed, were yet unexplored ; and their knowledge, even of its sea-coasts, was superficial ; but, as mankind are always prone to magnify what is uncertain, this very doubtfulness of the character of the country was perverted into a presumption of its excellence. They felt assured that, if they were industrious and persevering, the produce of the soil would liberally reward their exertions, and they hoped, without having occasion for either industry or perseverance, to start up into sudden opulence, fondly cherishing the belief that this continent, like its sister in the south, would yield them gold and silver in inexhaustible abundance.

Schemes for transporting colonies to North Virginia, as this part of America was then called, again became popular ; and, while these were in agitation, two vessels were despatched

(A. D. 1603) by the merchants of Bristol, under the command of Martin Prinne, partly on a commercial speculation, partly to ascertain whether Gosnold's account was entitled to full belief, or whether he had not concealed the defects and heightened the excellencies of the country, with a fond partiality for his own discoveries. Prinne examined the coast and islands, which Gosnold had discovered, besides meeting with many new objects of curiosity, and, after collecting a cargo of furs and sassafras, returned in safety to England ;—bringing back to his countrymen the most complete assurance of Gosnold's veracity, together with such other accounts in favour of the western continent, as greatly increased their passion for colonial establishments.

A report, similar in tendency, but in language still more rapturous, was made by George Weymouth, who, (A. D. 1605) being sent by the earl of Southampton and the lord Arundel of Wardour, in quest of a north-western passage to China, is chiefly remarkable as having first explored the river Penobscot.

With respect to these three voyages, we should recollect the observation made by Hubbard, in his history of New England, in forming our opinion of the flattering description of the country given by Gosnold, Prinne, and Weymouth. They landed here in the spring of the year, at a season when all nature is clad in verdant freshness ; and their error consisted, not in delineating the mildness of the climate and the luxuriance of the vegetable creation in too partial coloring, but in supposing these qualities of the country to be permanent and invariable. Englishmen, also, who were acquainted only with their own comparatively tame natural scenery, could not feel otherwise than delighted by the richness, profusion, and magnificence, which characterize the scenery of North America. Considering these circumstances, we certainly have a right to discharge Gosnold and his immediate successors from any imputation of wilful falsehood or designed misrepresentation, although, when the true condition of the country came to be known, the disappointment arising from the unexpected inclemency of the winter months was one of the most serious obstacles to the settlement of North Virginia.

Still the immediate effect of these voyages was to awaken the dormant spirit of colonization ; the warmest promoter of which was Richard Hakluyt, prebendary of Westminster, who, having early imbibed a taste for commercial knowledge, spent his

whole life in diffusing a relish for his favorite pursuits, and left behind him in his *Collection of Voyages*, a lasting monument of his enlightened and persevering zeal. In the opinion of Dr Robertson, England is indebted to him, more than to any other man of that age, for her transatlantic dominions ; since at length, chiefly by his instrumentality, an association was formed of sufficient wealth, numbers, and character to authorize the strongest hopes of eventually peopling a considerable portion of the new world with Englishmen. The charters granted by queen Elizabeth having either expired by the lapse of time, or been forfeited by the attainder of the grantees, new patents were become necessary ; and the projectors accordingly petitioned the king that he would be graciously pleased to sanction their designs with the royal authority. The reigning prince was James I, a monarch equally distinguished for his actual imbecility in the affairs of government, and for his pedantic affectation of political intelligence. He was delighted with the prospect, which was now opened to him, of displaying his legislative abilities, and eagerly engaged in an enterprise, that was so consonant with his tranquil and pacific temper. Resolving to patronize the intended settlement by his peculiar superintendence, he not only granted the petitioners a charter under the great seal of England, but also composed, with his own hand a system of colonial ordinances.

The letters-patent comprised a grant of all that extensive region of North America, which stretches along the sea-coast, between the thirty-fourth and forty-fifth degrees of latitude, and which, says Hubbard, being considered too vast to be moulded into a single government, was divided into two several colonies, both possessing equal privileges, and nearly equal extents of territory. The patentees of the first colony, residing chiefly at London, were authorized and required to settle south of the forty-first degree of latitude ; and those of the second, residing chiefly at Plymouth, designed to fix their settlement north of the thirty-eighth degree ; but neither colony was permitted to approach within one hundred miles of the establishment made by its confederate.

As no part of New England was settled by virtue of this charter, and as it is well abridged in several popular works, particularly the introduction to Chief Justice Marshall's biography of Washington, we shall interrupt our narrative but for a moment, in order to give such an account of it as is necessary

for comprehending the operations of the Plymouth and London Companies.—The government of each colony was vested, then, in the first instance, in a council of thirteen residing in the projected settlements ; and a Board of Control was formed in England, consisting likewise of two councils of thirteen ; the members of the several councils, being nominated by the king, and obliged to act conformably to his instructions. The patentees were empowered to export commodities from the mother country free of customs for seven years, to search for and work mines of gold, silver, and copper, and to declare the trade of the colonies open to all nations. Every right, which the colonists or their descendants could enjoy in their native land, was nominally secured to them after their emigration ; they being privileged, also, to hold their estates by the most liberal tenure recognized by the laws of England ; but all these assurances of giving stability to private rights were in effect annulled, and the rights themselves reduced to a mere name, by the several clauses in the charter, which conferred on the king the sole power of ruling the colonies by his laws, instructions, and appointments. In fact, the letters-patent were soon followed by a code of ordinances for the internal administration of the projected colonies, drawn up by the royal hand, as a model of the utmost perfection of ingenuity in legislation. This code, confirming the charter in several particulars, added many very odious features to it, requiring the religious ceremonies and tenets of the colonies to be conformable to the established church, vesting all the powers of government in the colonial councils subject only to the revision of the king and of the superior councils, and reserving to the king alone a right to make such alterations as he should see fit, in the system of colonial jurisprudence. The palpable and gross impolicy of this instrument, by which, on the one hand, the personal rights of the colonists were effaced for ever, and, on the other hand, the metropolis neglected to secure for itself any of those exclusive commercial advantages, which, in other countries and at later periods, have been made the basis of every system of colonization,—the evident impolicy of such an instrument compelled the king to revise it time after time, and soon tempted the colonies, settled under its authority, to establish, without waiting for the royal consent, those representative forms of government, which have ever since been the boast and salvation of America.

With this charter, however, and with these colonial laws, such as we have seen them to be, the two companies went into operation. A few adventurers, hastily drawn together by the company of London, undertook the settlement of South Virginia, (A. D. 1607,) and, after a long struggle with the difficulties inseparable from their situation, succeeded in laying the foundations of that rich and powerful commonwealth. The company of Plymouth, with which alone the scope of our proposed remarks connects us here, was feebler than its associate, and therefore slower in effecting the purpose of its creation. Some principal members of the company of Plymouth, among whom sir John Popham, lord chief justice of the court of king's bench, and sir Ferdinando Gorges, a gentleman of influence and fortune in the west of England, were the most zealous, sent two vessels, soon after they were incorporated, to explore their new acquisitions. One of these vessels was seized by the Spaniards, as an interloper; but the safe return and favorable report of the other encouraged the adventurers to prosecute their undertaking. A colony was therefore organized, (A. D. 1607,) consisting of George Popham, as president, Raleigh Gilbert, as admiral, and six inferior officers, with about one hundred private individuals; the fancy of the projectors having fashioned the outlines of a large and flourishing state. They selected a small island at the mouth of the river Kennebec for their place of residence, induced by the commodiousness of its situation, as a port for fishermen, and wholly unconscious of the excessive coldness of the climate. Arriving here towards the close of the year, they were barely enabled to build and fortify a store-house before the cold became intense; and they were afterwards oppressed by a rapid succession of hardships, unforeseen and unprepared for. Having emigrated in the expectation of enjoying a perpetual spring in America, it is easy to conceive how great was their disappointment, when they found themselves exposed to the premature and unusual severity of a northern winter. The loss of their store-house by fire, and the death of their president had already depressed their courage, when tidings arrived of the death of sir John Popham, who was the very soul of the expedition. Gilbert, also, returned to England in the spring, having succeeded to a rich inheritance, by the death of his brother, sir John Gilbert. A tradition has existed among the neighboring Indians, that this colony, without any

provocation, killed a number of their ancestors by an atrocious and unprincipled stratagem, and thus converted a friendly tribe into persevering and implacable foes.* The resolution of the adventurers seems to have sunk under these accumulated misfortunes ; for the settlement was soon afterwards abandoned in despair.

North Virginia now became the subject of detraction as violent and unauthorized, as its former celebrity had been extravagant. The prostrate colonists seemed anxious to hide their disgrace by invectives against the cold, sterile regions which they had forsaken ; and they were so far successful, that the company of Plymouth never made another effort of equal magnitude with the expedition to Sagadahoc. This part of America continued to draw the attention of merchants, by whose ships it was frequently visited, and a few enterprising individuals, among whom sir Ferdinando Gorges was pre-eminent, defrayed the expense of several voyages thither, which combined the pursuits of science and gain. These voyages were instrumental in developing the true character of the country, and in making its advantages more notorious ; but were seldom productive of any more important or memorable consequence. Many attempts were made by Gorges individually, both in person and by his agents, to establish colonies in North Virginia, with a perseverance worthy of better fortune, than it obtained ; for, after spending a large portion of his life and estate in these attempts, and involving himself in several vexatious suits, the whole issue of his exertions was the establishment of an inconsiderable settlement in Maine, which one of his descendants was glad to sell for a small consideration to the flourishing colony of Massachusetts. John Smith, also, so well known in the early history of Virginia, for his address and heroism, and for the romantic interest awakened by him in the breast of Pocahontas, undertook two voyages to this country, once in the service of private individuals, and again in that of the company of Plymouth. His first voyage was wholly commercial in its object, and as such was very successful ; but it was more remarkable for the circumstance, that, in the course of it, Smith made a personal survey of the principal islands, rivers, bays, and capes, from which he constructed a chart of the coast, and presented it to the

* The particulars of this tradition may be seen in the Collections of the Mass. Hist. Society, vol. i. p. 251.

prince of Wales, afterwards the unfortunate Charles I, who bestowed on the country the distinguishing name of New England. The energy of Smith prevailed on the company of Plymouth, soon after his return (A. D. 1615,) to make one more languid exertion ; but this second voyage ended unhappily ; for the ship, in which the colony embarked, and which Smith himself commanded, being unjustly seized and detained by the French, this expiring struggle of the adventurers likewise proved ineffectual.

Thus it appears that every attempt of this company to effect the design of its institution, was eventually frustrated. The furs, fish, and other productions of New England, continued to be an object of commercial enterprize, both to the company and to private merchants ; but, although one or two petty voyages were made for the purpose of farther discovery, few persons retained any serious thoughts of colonization. Nor ought this, when we consider the subject attentively, to occasion any surprise. So long as the object of establishing colonies in America was the acquisition of riches, it was not to be expected that shrewd and calculating capitalists would engage in it, until they discerned a fair prospect of success. They would be slow to hazard a certainty for the sake of what was exceedingly uncertain. Large sums of money were necessary for the collection and transportation of colonists, and the maintenance of them until they should be capable of supporting themselves, in a wild and uncultivated country. Nor was it easy to find persons, who were willing to quit England for America. The nature of the voyage, the hardships to be expected from residing in the new world, the want of precious metals in the country, to allure and stimulate adventurers ; the love of home implanted in the breast even of the lowest of the populace,—all these difficulties would render it no easy task to gather together a respectable body of colonists. A passage across the Atlantic was not then considered as it is now, to be safe at any season, and as an agreeable voyage at all times excepting in the coldest months of the year, but, on the contrary, was regarded with apprehension by all but experienced mariners. Besides, the early attempts of Raleigh and others to make settlements had completely failed, and every fresh disaster, not only disheartened the merchants and gentry, who lost by means of it, but deterred others from engaging in such hazardous experiments.—If, indeed, the first Eng-

lish navigators had found upon this coast a succession of mighty, polished, and wealthy barbaric empires, overflowing with a population that was rich without strength, luxurious without refinement or knowledge, factious and divided without skill in war, in short, laboring under the infirmities, without enjoying the corresponding benefits attendant on a high degree of civilization, and therefore presenting an easy prey to the conqueror; if the English emigrants, like the Spanish, had been introduced to a country covered with cultivated lands, and abounding in large and populous cities, to monarchs, encompassed with the whole pageantry of empire, to princes and nobles dwelling in sumptuous palaces, to priests performing their holy rites, in temples illuminated with diamonds and costly gems, instead of the frail products of European art, and walled up with massive columns of molten silver and gold instead of marble, temples adorned with such lavish profusion of gorgeous magnificence, that the most splendid edifices of the old world would seem comparatively poor and mean; if, indeed, the English had fallen upon a northern El Dorado, there is no doubt that they would speedily have rent assunder the ties which bound them to their natal soil, and flowed into Virginia, no less eagerly, swiftly, and precipitately, than the Spaniards inundated Peru and Mexico. But far different was the real situation of things, and different, therefore, the progress of colonization, in the Spanish and English possessions on the continent of America.

So great was the difficulty of obtaining settlers for the first colonies in North and South Virginia, that none but men of ruined fortunes and blighted expectations at home could be prevailed upon to adventure themselves upon what was accounted a forlorn and desperate expedition. Excepting the truly great men, who put themselves at the head of some of the colonies, the mass of the emigrants, were spendthrifts, 'unruly sparks,' in the expressive language of the Virginian Stith, 'packed off by their friends to escape a worse destiny at home,' needy adventurers, men deeply and irrecoverably involved in debts, and such others, continues the same historian, as were much fitter to ruin a commonwealth, than to raise or maintain it. It was this desperate character of the early emigrants, their incurable spirit of insubordination, their idle, dissolute, and irregular habits, the absence of any strong and fixed principle, to reconcile them to a perpetual separation

from their native land, added to their ignorance of the country, which so much retarded the growth of the settlement at James-Town. Nothing but the indefatigable exertions of capt. John Smith prevented its being abandoned, almost in the very outset ; and there is little doubt that, notwithstanding the zeal of capt. Smith, sir Thomas Dale, lord Delaware, and other gentlemen of the like spirit, this colony would have shared the fate of its contemporary at Sagadahoc, but for the superior mildness of the climate of South Virginia. It is impossible to say, therefore, how soon the council of Plymouth would have succeeded in colonizing the territory committed to their charge, in the ordinary course of events, by the means, on which they had hitherto relied, and if no stronger motive had intervened, than the remote prospect of individual or national emolument. Nay, there is too much reason to believe that, in a short time, New England would have been irrecoverably lost to Great Britain. French establishments on the north and east, as we shall presently see, and Dutch on the south, were gradually extending themselves more and more into the heart of New England, so that the very name itself was fast yielding place to those imposed on the country by France and the Netherlands. But a mightier principle of action was now at work in England, than either ambition or avarice ; a principle, that could steel men against suffering, and shield them from hardship, in situations where any different influence would have proved impotent. An animated, eager, unconquerable love of civil and religious freedom had sprung up under the scourge of ecclesiastical intolerance, a high and ardent enthusiasm, which enabled a band of persecuted pilgrims to do, what rank, power, and wealth had been striving in vain to accomplish.

We have been thus particular in showing the intercourse of the English with this country previous to the settlement of Plymouth. We will now extend the inquiry, although more briefly, to the enterprises of other nations, so far as they had immediate connexion with the history of New-England. To begin with the French, whatever may have been the truth in regard to the conflicting pretensions of France and England, it is certain that the former nation displayed more eagerness than the latter to confirm her title, and place it beyond the reach of dispute, by the formation of colonial establishments in North America. We have already mentioned

how early her seamen were engaged in the cod fishery on the Grand Banks ; and their ardor in the pursuit was unremittingly persevering. They fully appreciated the value of a settlement in the vicinity ; for although they, together with the people of other nations, had already (A. D. 1518) erected a number of houses on the island of Newfoundland, yet they saw clearly that it would be for their advantage to acquire exclusive possession of the neighbouring continent. With this end in view. Giovanni de' Verazzani, a Florentine in the service of Francis, having explored and copiously described the coast of North America, (A. D. 1524,) to which he gave the name of New-France, was sent thither the next year with a colony ; but he and all his companions perishing by some unknown misfortune, his king was for a time deterred from making the projected settlement.

Afterwards, however, the importance of a settlement for the protection of the fisheries and fur trade, being farther urged upon the court of France, several voyages, countenanced by the king, but chiefly the result of private enterprise and munificence, were performed by Jacques Cartier and François de Roberval (A. D. 1534—1549,) in which the geography of Canada was investigated, the country formally taken possession of in the king's name, and a small colony established. But the distracted state of the whole realm of France, in consequence of the civil wars, which were now raging there with uncontrolled violence, obstructed the progress of colonial enterprises. The disastrous fate of Roberval, and of a numerous train of adventurers, many of them gentlemen of rank and fortune, who embarked for the infant colony, but perished at sea, caused the colony to be long neglected by the French. In the mean time, they constantly pursued the fur trade and the fisheries, but, although the illustrious admiral de Coligni ineffectually attempted to form a place of refuge for his persecuted countrymen in Florida, fifty years elapsed before the people of France entered anew, with much spirit, into projects of colonization.

The political commotions, with which the kingdom had hitherto been convulsed, having at length subsided, and the sceptre of France being now held by the most enlightened of her monarchs (A. D. 1598,) designs were again conceived by the nation of establishing a colony in America, and pursued with unabated activity until their final accomplishment.

Several gentlemen were successively authorized to make settlements in America, with the privilege of exclusive trade among the inhabitants. The most memorable of these commissioners was that of Pierre du Gast, sieur de Ments, by which Henry IV constituted him lieutenant-general of all that region which lies between the fortieth and forty-sixth degrees of north latitude, by the name of Acadia. These limits plainly include all the now middle and eastern states in the Union, beside a part of the British provinces. De Ments instantly collected a number of adventurers of all ranks and professions, began several settlements in Acadia, and then, either in person or by his companions, explored the coast of New-England as far as Cape Cod (A. D. 1604—1606,) twice formally taking possession of the country as a domain of the king of France. In a few years the capital of Canada was settled, and thus France acquired those lasting establishments in the new world, which became, in the sequel, such potent adversaries to the colonial ascendancy of England. The new colony of South Virginia, indeed, soon became jealous of its rival neighbors, and commenced those bloody wars between the French and English colonists, which long desolated this country, by forcibly dislodging the little settlement in Acadia (A. D. 1613;) but this temporary check was unavailing, and it was apparent that, in consequence of the negligence and feebleness of the council of Plymouth, the power of France was fast over-spreading the whole extent of New-England.

Nor were the French the sole rivals of England, whom the short-sighted policy of the latter government suffered to grow up in America. The recent enterprises of these two nations had awakened all their maritime neighbors to a sense of the value of colonial acquisitions. The Dutch merchants, more especially, who had already attained a high character for commercial activity and zeal, seized upon the first opportunity, which presented itself, to establish a trading factory in North-Virginia. Henry Hudson, an eminent English navigator, having made two unsuccessful voyages in search of a north or north-east passage in the service of an association of his countrymen, was afterwards employed for the same purpose by the Dutch East India Company. Being again unsuccessful, and yet desirous that some memorable event should signalize his voyage, he resolved to conclude it by

exploring the adjacent coast of America. This design he accomplished (A. D. 1609,) tracing the continent along Acadia and New-England, from the St Lawrence to the Chesapeake, and afterwards sailing up that noble river, which perpetuates the memory of his voyage and of his name. As he landed and held continual intercourse with the savages, who generally treated him with a confidence and good faith that were by no means reciprocated, he enjoyed the most favorable opportunities for judging of this region, which, although he did not discover it, he was certainly the first to examine with exactness. His employers, who readily saw the advantage, which might be taken, of this voyage, immediately (A. D. 1610) commenced a profitable traffic with the inhabitants, and in a few years (A. D. 1613 and 1614) formed two small settlements, which afterwards grew into the cities of Albany and New-York.* Whether the Dutch purchased the claim of Hudson to the tract which he was supposed to have discovered, or whether they considered themselves entitled to it, because he sailed in their service and commission, it is now impossible to determine; but it is certain that they assumed the possession of it in consequence of Hudson's voyage, and retained it for a considerable length of time, to the great annoyance of some of the English colonies, particularly Connecticut, Plymouth, and Massachusetts. But as Hudson did not discover this part of the continent, nor possess any exclusive right to it whatever, neither England nor France, each of which had already taken possession of the whole country with the customary formalities, ever paid much respect to the adverse claim of Holland. And although it is difficult to see how barely landing upon the brink of a vast continent, and verbally claiming it, when the rightful owner is either not present to resist the claim, or, if resisting it, is replied to only by being forcibly expelled from his ancient possessions, although, we confess, it is difficult to see how any such summary and high-handed process as this should legally transfer the property of the soil, yet, as international law was then understood, perhaps England was justifiable in her subsequent conquest of the New-Netherlands.

Such was the early intercourse with America, of those three

* Collections of the New-York Historical Society, v. i.

nations, which were intimately associated with the history of the eastern colonies. But as several other nations were then more powerful, or perhaps we should say, more eminent for their knowledge and success in navigation, than either England, France, or the Batavian Republic, why, it may be asked, were these last so exclusively fortunate in acquiring possessions on the eastern side of North America ?

The maritime states in the north of Europe, if they felt any inclination, were obviously destitute of adequate means, for attempting to make foreign conquests, or to rival those powerful kingdoms, which, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, held almost undisputed dominion of the seas. It is not, therefore, at all extraordinary that hardly any settlement in this country was undertaken, at the period under consideration, by Norway, Denmark, Sweden, or the free cities of Germany and Poland, in their national and public character, although the posterity of Swedish and German emigrants now composes a large and most valuable element in the population of several of the middle states. But the inquiry still recurs, how is it that no portion of this country belongs to the inhabitants of South Europe ?—The Spaniards, Portuguese and Italians, at this time, surpassed all their contemporaries in the magnitude of their foreign acquisitions and maritime enterprises.—Portugal, whose appearance on the map of Europe is so insignificant, had obtained vast dominions in Asia and America ; Spain was absolute mistress of the larger and richer part of the western world ; and the minute republics of Italy, while they thronged every sea with their ships and mariners, were altogether supreme on the waters of the Mediterranean :—yet neither of these nations ever attempted to establish herself on the eastern coast of North America.

With regard to the last of these nations, we need not repeat what we have stated, in a former number, in an article vindicating the character of Amerigo Vespucci, that Italy, being partitioned into straightened republics and petty principalities, whose mutual jealousy exposed them to the incursions of foreign, and the no less desolating intrigues of domestic enemies, was effectually withheld from all enterprizes of extensive and national importance. As to the other two, soon after the successful voyages of Columbus, Gaspar de Cortereal, a Portuguese gentleman, stimulated by the jealousy that subsisted between his country and Spain, as we learn from the Jesuit Lafitau,

sailed at his own expense on a voyage of discovery in which he explored and named the coast of Labrador, (A. D. 1500.) Immediately after his return, he fitted out another expedition, in which he was lost without leaving any vestige behind; and his brother, who sailed in quest of him, experienced the same fate.

A few years afterwards (A. D. 1506,) a Spaniard, of the name of Velasco, is said to have sailed up the river of Canada, and, coasted along the shores of the Tierra de Labrador; but this voyage is doubted by Charlevoix, nor is it mentioned by Gomara. This last writer, however, is not very remarkable for minute accuracy,* and tells us, himself, that several voyages, of which he gives us no account, were made to this coast early in the sixteenth century. Stephen Gomez is the first Spaniard, who is certainly known to have visited this country, which he did in the year following the voyage of Verazzani. But none of these voyages led to any memorable consequence; and Spain and Portugal, notwithstanding their pretensions, appeared to have abandoned the northern parts of this continent to other nations, continuing only to come here occasionally, for the purpose of fishing on the Banks. Accustomed, as they were, to a warm and grateful atmosphere, they probably dreaded a country, which remained buried in snows, for many months in succession; for it is remarkable that no people acquired a permanent footing in the colder regions of this continent, except the hardy natives of a similar climate in Europe. Besides, when Portugal and Spain had planted colonies in the warm, rich, and fertile climes of Asia, Africa, and America; especially when they had swept across the tropical regions of America like a torrent, scarcely resisted by the inhabitants, who were either feeble and unwarlike, or, if warlike, unskilled to withstand the fire-arms and discipline of Europeans; and lastly, when they were pampered with spices, gems, and gold, till their avarice became as greedy and violent as it had ever been insatiable; when they had done all this, they would naturally despise a country, which furnished nothing valuable but furs, whose only commerce thus evinced its wildness, whose climate was known to

* The opinion of Antoino de Solis may be taken as conclusive on this point. He says: *Escribiola* (i. e. la historia de la Nueva España), primero Francisco Lopez de Gomara, *con poco examen y puntualidad*, porque dice lo que oyo, y lo afirma con sobrada credulidad, fiandose tanto de sus oidos como pudiera de sus ojos, sin hallar dificultad en lo inverisimil, ni resistencia en lo imposible.—*Conquista de Mexico*.

be inclement, and whose soil was darkened by forests, that sheltered a race of vigorous, warlike, and independent savages.

ART. III.—*A foreigner's opinion of England, &c. By C. A. G. Gæde. Translated from the German, by Thomas Horne. Wells & Lilly, Boston.*

TRAVELLERS from the continent of Europe, who have published their opinions of England, divide themselves with a few exceptions into two classes; of which the most numerous is made up of illiberal writers, who speak only the language of prejudice, and represent every object in the hues which their own national prepossessions, or personal antipathies, have thrown over it. The misrepresentations of such persons are so glaring, as generally to carry their refutation with them to the mind of every candid reader. It is not equally easy to guard against the more excusable, but hardly less mischievous faults of tourists of the opposite character. It matters little to the reader, whether he is deceived by a spirit of malignity and censoriousness, or by an overweening partiality on the part of the narrator. He has equal cause of complaint in either case, for he is equally misled; and to the nation which has the misfortune to be injured, it is of little moment whether it be by inordinate praise, or unmerited censure. Not that we have among ourselves any very great reason to murmur at the hardships we have suffered, from the first of these causes, but we have observed of late, that the manners of European nations, towards each other, in this regard are wonderfully softened, and that the writers of the present day, bandy compliments across the channel with as hearty a good will as their predecessors were wont to do invective and abuse. In this age of good humour, and good manners, we certainly are not disposed to act a churlish part, and to find fault with the prevailing sentiment. As indifferent readers, however, whose object is correct information, it is equally important to us, that truth should not be obscured by petulance or flattery. We do not intend to rank the writer now under consideration, in either of the above mentioned classes of travellers, although from a misapprehension of the true character of the government, and people of England, he occasionally falls into the faults of both. The author of this work was a professor in the philosophical faculty of the university at Göttingen; and died prematurely